40 JUL

THE OFFICIAL MARVEL® NEWS MAGAZINE!

MARVEL AGE®

SPECIAL PREVIEW OF

G.I. JOE® SPECIAL MISSIONS

plus: the Return of Romance comics!

Stan Lee presents

MARVEL AGE®

SALICRUP'S SECTION

You know how every Christmas people say they wish they could hold on to the Christmas spirit all year long? Well, here's a full report on Marvel's 1985 Christmas party—that should put you in the mood! So take it away, **Kurt Busiek, party reporter**...

What was the Marvel Christmas party? Well, on one level, it was plenty of food, a lot of music, strobe lights and ice cream, a crowded office and a lot of noise. But on another level, it was about what a lot of things at Marvel are about: people having fun. It's not a fancy affair, but it sure is energetic. According to **Jim Shooter**, that energy is what created the party years ago, and what keeps it going (and growing) year to year. "Originally," Jim says, "the concept was to have a party for the freelancers, 'cause there was already a little party for the staff, but there was really nothing official for the freelancers. So we started sort of a do-it-yourself party and after a while, we got the brass upstairs to kick in, and made it into a big annual event. Basically it's for the people here in Editorial, the people who do all the other things—the whole Marvel staff plus all the freelancers you can imagine and even some friends, girlfriends and boyfriends and cousins and wives—even **Rachel Milgrom** shows up! It's *the* party of the year.

"**Lynn Cohen**, the Adminstrative Manager of Art and Editorial, does most of the organizing," Jim tells us. "But even she and her crew can't really supervise the thing as it's going on. She comes dressed in a party dress and has a great time and dances and carries on as much as anyone else." Lynn confirms this. "Actually, I didn't do any work," she says. "The party was planned by itself—it just sort of happened. I wanted sushi, and so we had a sushi bar. I wanted beer—so we had beer. Wine, so we had wine. What's the point of having a party if you don't have things you like? For instance, you can't have a party without M&Ms."

"I will say that **Shoshana Maliet** and **Christine Aurilia** (Lynn's assistants) did most of the work, but even so, they didn't do all the work. We had our high school interns helping out and a few other people helped out too. So really, the party was run by our high school interns. They did all the work—we just bossed them around and looked busy."

Of course, one of the high points about a Christmas party is dancing, and for that you need music. For the past two years, the

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Here is a complete checklist of what's happening in all the Marvel, Epic and Star titles bearing an **August** cover date.

A **Limited Series** is a title which will only run for a specific number of issues.

A **Graphic Novel** is a trade paperback-sized edition.

A **Direct Sales** title is available only at selected outlets.

Shipping Date refers to the date the comics leave the printer.

MARVEL® COMING ATTRACTIONS

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Spider-Man's red and blue costume is gone—and with it maybe **Spider-Man** as well! The full story begins in **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** and continues in both **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** and **PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN**! Wait until you see who **Scourge** is gunning for in **CAPTAIN AMERICA**! **G.I. JOE** celebrates its 50th issue with a surprise special and **SQUADRON SUPREME** concludes in a truly earth-shaking finale!

All this is just a glimpse of what awaits you in next month's Marvels! Don't risk missing out on any of the adventures! Tell your favorite comics shop owner to reserve the titles you want today!

Wolverine gets mean in THE UNCANNY X-MEN!

Titles Shipping April 1.
On Sale April 22.

☐ **DAKOTA NORTH** #2—The mysterious leaders of Rycorn launch another assassination plot against **Dakota North**. Instead of helping her, **Dakota's** brat of a brother winds up making her life worse! It's gum-shoe case-solving with fashion-design finesse in "Pet Tricks" written by **Martha Thomases** and drawn by **Tony Salmons**. 75¢.

☐ **DAREDEVIL** #233—**Daredevil** takes on both **Nuke** *and* **the Kingpin** in a final confrontation which only one word can describe: "Armageddon!"—written by **Frank Miller** and drawn by **David Mazzucchelli**. 75¢.

☐ **MEET MISTY (Limited Series)** #5—Marvel's amazing teen queen takes off in three all-new adventures! **Misty** finds herself caught in the middle of a wild electronic cross-fire in "Video Wars!" What's modeling really like? **Misty's** Aunt **Millie** gives her a clue in "Millie's Memories." And capping the trio of tales is "That's About the Size of It." All are written and drawn by **Trina Robbins**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **THE NEW MUTANTS** #42—Check it out—the strangest teens of all have finally found out just what **Empath** did to **Magneto, Tom** and **Sharon**, and boy, are they sore! "Getting Even" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **Steve Purcell** and inked by **Whilce Portacio**. 75¢.

☐ **THUNDERCATS** #5—**Lion-O** must team up with his enemy **Lynx-Ana** to rescue the spirit of **Jaga the Wise** from the evil **Mumm-Ra** in "To Plunder Castle Plun-Darr!" written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Jim Mooney** and inked by **Brett Breeding**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **WEB OF SPIDER-MAN** #17—**Peter Parker's** Appalachian assignment for NOW magazine concludes in a way that permanently affects the future of **Spider-Man**! **Spidey** defeats the terrible **Magma**—but at what cost? Featuring the *final* appearance of the red and blue suit! And maybe of **Spider-Man** as well! "The Magma Solution" is written by **David Michelinie**, penciled by **Marc Silvestri** and inked by **Kyle Baker**. 75¢.

☐ **WEST COAST AVENGERS** #11—**Mockingbird** encounters kung-fu action of the lethal kind when she goes to get the straight scoop from **Nick Fury** about S.H.I.E.L.D.'s recent ominous doings, and instead runs straight into **Razorfist, Shockwave** and **Zarant**! "Pride of the Regiment" is written by **Steve Englehart**, penciled by **Al Milgrom** and inked by **Joe Sinnott**. 75¢.

☐ **SQUADRON SUPREME** #12—The final issue of the series finds **the Squadron** locked in a life-or-death battle with **Nighthawk's Redeemers** for the ultimate prize: Earth! Both sides believe their causes are just—but is either in the right? Written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Ryan** and inked by **Sam de la Rosa**. Double-sized! $1.25.

☐ **MOONSHADOW** #8—**Moonshadow**, a social and political outcast, becomes an inter-galactic bag-person. Written by **J. DeMatteis** and painted by **J. Muth**. An Epic Comic. Direct Sales only. Baxter paper. For Mature Readers. $1.50.

The Incredible Hulk gets to tangle with just about everybody!

Titles Shipping April 8.
On Sale April 29.

☐ **ALPHA FLIGHT** #37—A child is born to **Snowbird**! But will her offspring prove to be the herald of doom for **Alpha Flight**? Written by **Bill Mantlo**, penciled by **Dave Ross** and inked by **Gerry Talaoc**. 75¢.

☐ **CAPTAIN AMERICA** #320—**Scourge** has slain 29 Marvel characters so far! His sights are now set on number 30—***Captain America***! "The Little Bang Theory" is written by **Mark Gruenwald**, penciled by **Paul Neary** and inked by **Dennis Janke**. 75¢.

☐ **DOCTOR STRANGE** #78—**Eritharmon** the weaver repairs **Doc's** tattered Cloak of Levitation—for a price. Then, to save **Cloak, Doctor Strange** passes through the Darkness and battles **Ecstasy** and the being known only as "the Shadow"! "**Cloaks** and **Dangers**" is written by **Peter B. Gillis**, penciled by **Chris Warner** and inked by **Mark Badger**. 75¢.

☐ **GROO THE WANDERER** #18—**Groo** continues to wreak havoc everywhere, accompanied by the sounds of giggling readers! By **Sergio Aragones**, with **Mark Evanier**. An Epic Comic. 75¢.

☐ **HEATHCLIFF** #9—A tire blow-out on a lonely mountain road thrusts **Heathcliff** and **Grandpa Nutmeg** into the middle of a wild mountain feud, and poor **Heathcliff** into a romance he'll never forget, in "Blow Out!" Plus: **Heathcliff** meets a vampire cat in "Catula!" Both stories written by **Michael Gallagher**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** #279—Mercenary mayhem takes on an unusual twist when **Silver Sable** locks horns with **Jack-O'-Lantern**—while the mystery of **Spidey's** disappearance deepens! "Silver is the Sable" ties-in with **WEB** #17, and is written by **Tom DeFalco**, guest-pencilled by **Rick Leonardi** and guest-inked by **Vince Colletta**. 75¢.

☐ **THE VISION AND SCARLET WITCH (Limited Series)** #11—**The Amazing Spider-Man** guest stars in this titanic penultimate issue! **The Terrible Toad-King** returns to wreak revenge on **the Vision** and attempts to capture the pregnant **Scarlet Witch** again! Meanwhile, **Quicksilver** continues on his mad rampage! "A Taxing Time" is written by **Steve Englehart**, pencilled by **Richard Howell** and inked by **Frank Springer**. 75¢.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR** #9—The ultimate reference for FF fans everywhere continues with more story synopses of the classic adventures, complete credits of each tale and color cover reproductions, too! Compiled by **George Olshevsky**. $1.25.

☐ **POWER PACK** #25—In the climactic chapter of the terrible **Snark Wars, the Power Pack** finally regain their powers! Trouble is, their abilities have been switched! If you think that *sounds* confusing, you should see what happens when **the Snarks** launch their final attack in "Power Trip" written by **Louise Simonson**, pencilled by **John Bogdanove** and inked by **Bob Wiacek**. 75¢.

☐ **THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION** #9—Your favorite heroes, your favorite villains, their gadgets, powers, weaknesses, histories and where they kick up their feet when they're not battling each other, plus full-color illustrations of each one done by your favorite artists, all inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. Written by **Mark Gruenwald** and **Peter Sanderson**. $1.50.

☐ **SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN** #126—The Code of the Mercenary is put to an unexpected—and deadly—test for **Conan**, when he finds himself pitted against a man he trained in "The Mercenary!" Scripted by **Larry Yakata** and plotted and drawn by **Gary Kwapisz**. A Marvel Magazine. $1.50.

Titles Shipping April 15.

On Sale May 6.

☐ **MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE** #41—Marvel's 25th Anniversary celebration continues with a special **Stan Lee** issue! The legendary Stan's Soapbox returns as our latest regular feature! Plus: a report on the **Spider-Man** newspaper strip which **Stan** writes, a sneak peek at what's going to happen to **the Vision** and **Scarlet Witch**, a look at the brand new **MARVEL TALES** line-up, and all our regular features! Direct Sales only. 50¢. Still cheap.

What's the matter with **Crystal**? Find out in THE VISION AND THE SCARLET WITCH!

☐ **THE AVENGERS #270**—Why is everyone rioting to oust **Namor** from **the Avengers**? **Moonstone** has the answer—and it's all part of an even greater plot! "Wild in the Streets" is written by **Roger Stern**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Tom Palmer**. 75¢.

☐ **CONAN THE BARBARIAN #185**—**Tetra** returns! Together she and **Conan** discover the price of love in an incredible tale of death and devotion called "Monument!" Written by **Jim Owsley**, penciled by **John Buscema** and inked by **Ernie Chan**. 75¢.

☐ **THE ETERNALS #11**—With **Thena** deposed and **Ikarus** in charge, **the Eternals** declare war on **the Deviants**! At the same time **High Priest Ghaur** conspires to awaken the fabled **Dreaming Celestial**! Written by **Walt Simonson**, penciled by **Keith Pollard** and inked by **Al Gordon**. 75¢.

☐ **THE INCREDIBLE HULK #322**—Are **the Avengers** out to kill **the Hulk**? The dying **Bruce Banner** better hope not—the jade-skinned giant and **the Avengers** may be the only hope he has! Written and penciled by **Al Milgrom**. 75¢.

☐ **MARVEL TALES #190**—The final issue in the format reprinting consecutive issues from **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN** features one of the most acclaimed stories of the series: "Spider-Man No More!" reprinted from **AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #50**. Written by **Stan Lee** and drawn by **John Romita Sr.** 75¢.

☐ **X-MEN #208**—**Rachel** is on the run from **the Hellfire Club** *and* **the X-Men**! As if that weren't bad enough, now is the time when **Nimrod** attacks! "Retribution!" is written by **Chris Claremont**, penciled by **John Romita Jr.** and inked by **Dan Green**. 75¢.

☐ **MARVEL SAGA #9**—The linear history of the Marvel Universe presents the climactic conclusion of **the Angel's** origin, featuring **Cyclops, Iceman** and **Professor X**, the return of **Doctor Doom**, and **Spider-Man's** and **the Hulk's** first meetings and crossovers with **the Fantastic Four**! Also: the first appearance of Marvel creators in the comics, as well as the debut of **the Impossible Man**! And those are just this issue's headlines! Researched and written by **Peter Sanderson** and featuring stories by **Stan Lee, Roy Thomas** and **Larry Lieber** and art by **Steve Ditko, Dick Ayers, Jack Kirby, Werner Roth** and more! Wraparound cover penciled by **Ron Frenz**. $1.00.

☐ **G.I. JOE #50**—This spectacular giant-sized fiftieth issue features not just two stories, but two *books* in one! That's right, **SPECIAL MISSIONS**, the new **G.I. JOE** title, debuts here! Couple this with the origin of the incredible **Cobra Emperor** and the all-out battle for Springfield, this is definitely *the* **G.I. JOE** comic you must not miss! $1.25.

☐ **DREADSTAR #25**—**The High Lord Papal** gloats as **Dreadstar** and his friends are tried for their crimes against **the Instrumentality**. Does he gloat too soon, or is this truly the end of **Dreadstar's** rebellion? Written and drawn by **Jim Starlin**. An Epic Comic. Direct Sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

MARVEL TALES #190—featuring the debut of **the Kingpin**

DROIDS TM and © 1986 Lucasfilm (LFL). All Rights reserved.

Droids in space, courtesy of artists **John Romita** and **Al Williamson**

Titles Shipping April 22, On Sale May 13.

☐ **DROIDS #3**—**Artoo** and **Threepio** are trapped aboard the ship of **Reddjak**, the infamous space pirate who plans to destroy the secret interstellar space mission! Unless **Artoo** and **Threepio** can think of something, he will! "The Scarlet Pirate" is written by **Dave Manak**, penciled by **John Romita Sr.** and inked by **Al Williamson**. A Star Comic. 75¢.

☐ **ELFQUEST #13**—**Cutter** and **Skywise** discover more secrets in the mysterious forests, while at the village of Sorrow's End, **Leeta** embarks on a quest of her own— to save **Cutter** and **Skywise** from imminent danger! Written by **Wendy** and **Richard Pini** and drawn by **Wendy Pini**. An Epic Comic. 75¢.

☐ **FANTASTIC FOUR #293**—**The Fantastic Four** travel to California to find one of the most famous missing people of all—**the Thing**! "Central City Does Not Answer" is written and penciled by **John Byrne** and inked by **Al Gordon**. 75¢.

☐ **IRON MAN #209**—**The Living Laser** returns to kill **Iron Man**. Can even **Iron Man's** armor withstand the punishment meted by a foe who has literally become a *living laser*? "Return of the Living Laser" is plotted by **Denny O'Neil**, penciled by **Mark Bright** and inked by **Ian Akin** and **Brian Garvey**. 75¢.

☐ **PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #117**—Hell hath no fury like a woman scorned—or deprived of her super powers! That's what **Doctor Strange** discovers when **Black Cat**, the woman who's "bad luck" powers he eliminated, catches him! Meanwhile, the mystery deepens—where is **Spider-Man**? "Dinner Hour" is written by **Peter David**, penciled by **Rich Buckler** and inked by **Bob McLeod**. 75¢.

☐ **THOR #370**—**Thor's** battle with **the Zaniac** takes an astonishing turn! But that's nothing compared to the shocking appearance of **Justice Peace**—a law-enforcer from the future! What crime is so monstrous that he must journey to the past to stop it before the plotters can even conceive it? Written by **Walt Simonson** and drawn by **Sal Buscema**. 75¢.

☐ **TOP DOG #9**—It's the second Star Comic team-up—and it might just be the last, too, because joining **Top Dog** is that cantankerous cat, **Heathcliff**! Will they get along like cats and dogs or will they be able to cooperate long enough to unravel "The Mystery of the Missing Millions"? Written by **Sid Jacobson**, penciled by **Warren Kremer** and inked by **Jacqueline Roettcher**. 75¢.

☐ **TRANSFORMERS #19**—**Optimus Prime** leads **the Autobots** in a desperate attack on the impregnable Decepticon Command Center! Will **Optimus Prime's** gamble produce the ultimate pay-off, or cause all **the Autobots** to cash in their chips? Introducing the most amazing Autobot of all—**Omega Supreme**! "Command Performances" is written by **Bob Budiansky**, penciled by **Don Perlin** and inked by **Keith Williams**. 75¢.

☐ **X-FACTOR #7**—After **X-Factor's** hard-fought battle with **the Alliance**, the media turn their attention towards the mutants. Their question is this: is **X-Factor** doing more harm than good? The team won't have much time to think about it—they've got to rescue a young girl mutant too! Written by **Louise Simonson**, penciled by **Jackson Guice** and inked by **Joe Rubinstein**. 75¢.

☐ **ALIEN LEGION #14**—**Sarigar's** sister is the victim of the vicious **Hunter**! It's up to **Sarigar** to mete out justice—or is it vengeance? Written by **Alan Zelenetz**, penciled by **Larry Stroman** and inked by **Randy Emberlin**. An Epic Comic. Direct Sales Only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

☐ **DOCTOR WHO #23**—The world's most amazing TV time traveler is featured in a frequently requested story: "An Unearthly Child" written by **Tim Quinn** and drawn by **Dick Howett**. Plus: "Lunar Lagoon" written by **Steve Parkhouse** and drawn by **Mick Austin** and "Voyage to the End of the Universe" written by **Paul Neary** and drawn by **David Lloyd**. Direct Sales only. Baxter paper. $1.50.

MORE COMING ATTRACTIONS

Titles Shipping May.

CLOAK AND DAGGER #8—by Mantlo, Leonardi and Austin.
DAREDEVIL #234—by Miller and Mazzucchelli.
FRAGGLE ROCK #8—by Kay and M. Severin.
HE-MAN #3—by Carlin, Wilson and Janke.
NEW MUTANTS #43—by Claremont, Guice and Austin.
PETER PORKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM #10—by Mellor and Albelo.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #18—by Michelinie, Silvestri and Baker.
WEST COAST AVENGERS #12—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
CONAN THE KING #36—by Kraar, Hunt and Nichols.
SWORDS OF THE SWASHBUCKLERS #8—by Mantlo and Isherwood.
ALPHA FLIGHT #38—by Mantlo, Ross and Talaoc.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #321—by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
EWOKS #9—by Manak, Kremer and D'Agostino.
GROO THE WANDERER #19—by Aragones with Evanier.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #10—by Gruenwald and Sanderson.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #280—by DeFalco, Frenz and Rubinstein.
THE VISION AND SCARLET WITCH #12—by Englehart, Howell and Springer.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR #10—compiled by Olshevsky.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #127—by Kraar and Docherty.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #42
THE AVENGERS #271—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #186—by Owsley, J. Buscema and Chan.
G.I. JOE #51—by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #323—by Milgrom.
MARVEL TALES #191
MUPPET BABIES #9—by Kay and Severin.
X-MEN #209—by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green.
MARVEL SAGA #10—by Sanderson.
THE ETERNALS #12—by Simonson and S. Buscema.
POWER MAN AND IRON FIST #125—by Owsley, Bright and Acerno.
MARVEL FANFARE #28
CARE BEARS #6—by Kay, Post and Edelman.
ELFQUEST #14—by W. and R. Pini.
FANTASTIC FOUR #294—by Byrne and Gordon.
IRON MAN #210
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #118—by David, Buckler and McLeod.
SECTAURS #8—by Mantlo, Geiger and Williams.
STAR WARS #107—by Duffy and Martin.
THOR #371—by W. Simonson and S. Buscema.
THE TRANSFORMERS #20—by Budiansky, Perlin and Williams.
X-FACTOR #8—by L. Simonson, Guice and Rubinstein.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO MARVEL TEAM-UP #5—compiled by Olshevsky.

Step out in style with Top Dog!

ICEMAN SHIFTS TO HIS HUMAN FORM AND...
THE BEAST HAD TALKED MIKE DOWN, HADN'T YOU, HANK?
CERTAINLY! HE WAS READY TO GIVE UP THE DRUGS-- ALLOW US TO TEACH HIM TO CONTROL HIS POWERS WITHOUT THEM!

Looks like trouble's brewing in X-FACTOR

DOCTOR WHO #24—by Parkhouse and N. Austin.
SAVAGE TALES #6
BOZZ CHRONICLES #4—by Michelinie and Blevins.

Titles Shipping June.

MARVEL AGE ANNUAL #2
DAKOTA NORTH #3—by Thomases and Salmons.
DAREDEVIL #235—by Miller and Mazzucchelli.
MEET MISTY #6—by Robbins.
THE NEW MUTANTS #44—by Claremont, Guice and Austin.
THUNDERCATS #6—by Michelinie, Mooney and Breeding.
WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #19—by Michelinie, Silvestri and Baker.
WEST COAST AVENGERS #13—by Englehart, Milgrom and Sinnott.
MOONSHADOW #9—by DeMatteis and Muth.
ALPHA FLIGHT #39—by Mantlo, Ross and Talaoc.
CAPTAIN AMERICA #322—by Gruenwald, Neary and Janke.
DOCTOR STRANGE #79—by Gillis, Warner and Badger.
GROO THE WANDERER #20—by Aragones with Evanier.
HEATHCLIFF #11—by Gallagher, Kremer and Roettcher
POWER PACK #26—by L. Simonson, Bogdanove and Wiacek.
THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #281—by DeFalco, Frenz and Rubinstein.
THE OFFICIAL MARVEL COMICS INDEX TO THE FANTASTIC FOUR #11—compiled by Olshevsky.
THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE DELUXE EDITION #11—by Gruenwald and Sanderson.
SAVAGE SWORD OF CONAN #128—by Yakata and Kwapisz.
MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #43
THE AVENGERS #272—by Stern, J. Buscema and Palmer.
CONAN THE BARBARIAN #187—by Owsley, J. Buscema and Chan.
G.I. JOE #52—by Hama, Whigham and Mushynsky.
THE INCREDIBLE HULK #324—by Milgrom.
X-MEN #210—by Claremont, Romita Jr. and Green.
MARVEL SAGA #11—by Sanderson.
DREADSTAR #26—by Starlin.
DROIDS #4—by Manak, Romita Sr. and Williamson.
ELFQUEST #15—by W. and R. Pini.
FANTASTIC FOUR #295—by Byrne and Gordon.
IRON MAN #211
PETER PARKER THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN #119—by David, Buckler and McLeod.
THOR #372—by W. Simonson and S. Buscema.
TOP DOG #10—by Jacobson, Kremer and Roettcher.
THE TRANSFORMERS #21—by Budiansky, Perlin and Williams.
X-FACTOR #9—by Layton, Guice and Rubinstein.
ALIEN LEGION #15—by Zelenetz, Stroman and Emberlin.
DOCTOR WHO #25—by Parkhouse and N. Austin.

NEWSWATCH

Peter Parker's redecorated apartment: the untold story!

ITEM! As sharp-eyed readers of SPIDER-MAN comics have seen, **Peter Parker's** recently torched apartment has a whole new look, courtesy of his girl-friend **Mary Jane Watson**, who spent $5,000 to transform the once bohemian pad into a real upscale retreat!

In an exclusive story-behind-the-story, SPIDER-MAN Editor **Jim Owsley** told us that the actual design and furnishing were done by Marvel ace designer, **Janet Jackson**!

When it was decided to redo Peter's pad, Jim asked Janet what she would do were she in Mary Jane's shoes and had five grand to spend in redecorating. Janet immediately started planning and researching—going so far as to actually scout out $5,000 worth of trendy furniture! Everything in Peter's apartment is based on genuine store items and as you can see from these illustrations and in the Spidey comics, themselves, it was truly money well spent!

Her next assignment . . . the MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE office?

ITEM! In POWER PACK #23, with the series' four young stars off in deep space fighting the Snark Wars, Marvel Comics will join with Child Find, Inc., to draw attention to the plight of missing children right here on Earth.

Instead of a letters page, POWER PACK #23 will carry photos of four children who have been reported missing. It will also include procedures parents should follow if their children are missing, rules children can follow to prevent child abduction, and a toll-free telephone number (1–800–I–AM–LOST) children can call if they are lost.

"I wanted to make the point to our readers that parents really do worry, very much, when their children can't be found," POWER PACK writer **Louise Simonson** stated. "Many kids don't really realize just how much their folks care for them."

Louise approached editor **Carl Potts** about including some material concerning real-life children in the issue. With the help of Marvel Publicity Director **Pam Rutt**, they coordinated with Child Find, Inc., to add the text page.

POWER PACK #23 won't be the end of Marvel's involvement with missing children, Carl revealed. A special story starring **Power Pack** and **Cloak and Dagger** is already in the works, slated to appear sometime next year, possibly as a one-shot issue. The tale will be written by **Bill Mantlo** and Louise Simonson.

Persons interested in contacting Child Find, Inc., can do so by writing:

Child Find, Inc.
7 Innis Avenue
New Paltz, NY 12561

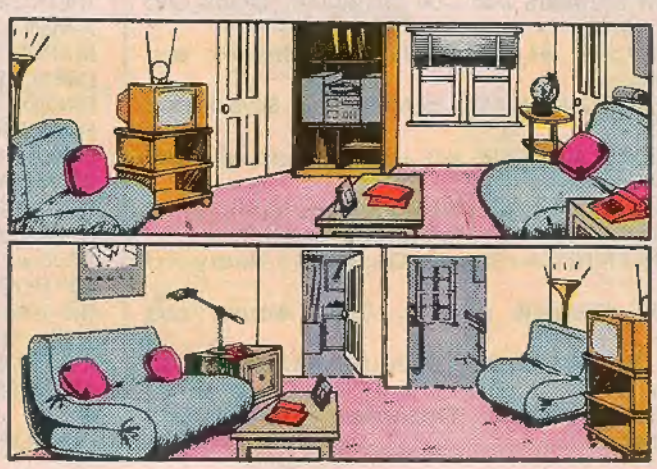
THE TOP TEN

It's time for the first Top Ten of a brand new year! This is a listing of the ten best selling direct sales titles for January, 1986, as provided by Director of Specialty Sales **Carol Kalish**!

1—X-FACTOR #4
2—X-MEN #205
3—ALPHA FLIGHT #34
4—MARVEL UNIVERSE #6
5—FANTASTIC FOUR #290
6—WEST COAST AVENGERS #8
7—AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #278
8—PUNISHER #5
9—NEW MUTANTS #39
10—WEB OF SPIDER-MAN #14

BULLPEN BIRTHDAYS

BULLPEN BIRTHDAYS	
April 16	Kim DeMulder
April 17	Earl Norem
April 22	Steve Englehart
April 25	Peter Sanderson
April 26	Kerry Gammill



X-TRA THE MUTANT REPORT X-TRA

VOLUME 1 "The Next Step in News Evolution" NUMBER 11

Dressing up the Dazzler

There is one constant that keeps things moving in the hectic and bustling Marvel Bullpen: A prevailingly strange sense of humor! One of the many forms this humor takes is the Marvel Bullpen contests. There have been such notable diversions as the Caption Contest and the Cast the Marvel Movie Contest, among others. But one that really caught our attention was the **Dazzler** Costume Contest.

"It was just a joke we put up on the Bullpen wall," explained editor, **Mike Carlin**. "Had we gotten a real good costume, though, we would have used it in the book."

But the Bullpen, holding true to form, went for the different, the unique, the ... um ... weird. Among the approximately 50 entries were the Dazzler dressed as **Wolverine**, as **the Punisher**, as **Man-Thing** (Dazzler-Thing?), as **Gumby**, and even as **Michael Jackson**!

"They were pretty much what we expected," said Mike. "We wanted to see what kind of crazy costumes we'd get back and we weren't disappointed. It was amusing and a lot of fun."

So let's give a big round of applause to all those fashion designers in the Bullpen. Take a gander at those we've printed and let us know which are your favorites. Oh, and a special extra clap for those entries we *couldn't* print. Whew! What you missed!

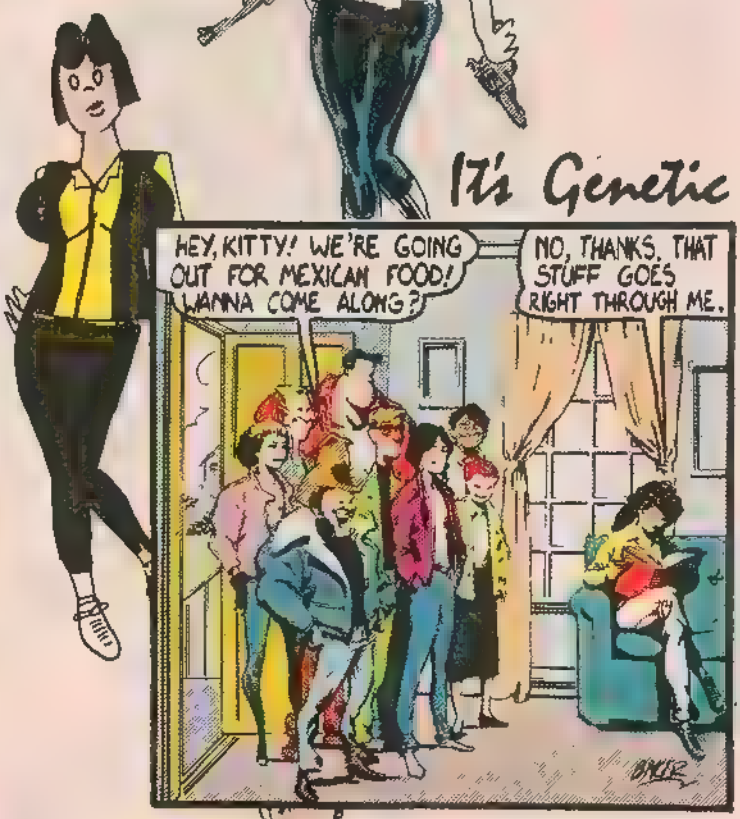
Will we ever see Daz in any of this chic evening wear? "No," said Mike, "only in the pages of MARVEL AGE." So enjoy!

—Bill Slavicsek

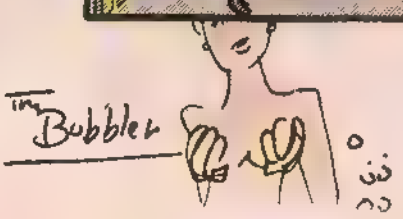
IT'S DAZZLIN' TIME!
NO, DAZZLER, JOO STILL CAN' PERFORM AT TH' CLUB!
HEE! HEE! HEE!
SNAP!!
ACK!
GET.
WHAT A BODY!!

THE

ROAD DAZZLER



by **Kyle Baker**



L ♡ V E
IS IN THE AIR

Romance comics and Marvel Comics have a lot more in common than you might imagine. It's fairly well known that, along with Stan Lee, Jack Kirby co-created the Fantastic Four, the Hulk, the X-Men, the Inhumans, the Avengers and on and on and on—so it's not unreasonable to credit Jack with the co-creation of the Marvel Universe. And earlier, when Marvel was Timely Comics, Jack co-created (along with Joe Simon) Captain America, and any number of other characters. But did you know that Jack co-created romance comics as well? Yep, the series considered to be the first romance comic is MY DATE, and it was a Simon and Kirby production.

MY DATE lasted only four issues, but it was quickly followed up with YOUNG LOVE and YOUNG ROMANCE, two of the longest-lasting and most successful romance comics ever. And as you might have guessed by now, Joe and Jack were behind those too.

So why this history lesson? Well, it's our way of building up to the announcement that romance comics are back, and Marvel's got 'em! This summer, we'll be premiering TENDER HEARTS, a brand-new romance series. TENDER HEARTS has its roots in classic romance comics tradition, but there's a lot that a comics aficionado will find unusual about it. For example:

—each "issue" of TENDER HEARTS will be the same size and shape as a paperback novel.

—the stories will be printed in black and white.

—each story is 118 pages long, featuring two or three panels of artwork on each page.

Why so strange? Well, it's pretty simple, really. With TENDER HEARTS, we're working in partnership with a book publisher, Harlequin Books. The series is being produced in tandem with Harlequin's Silhouette division, which is the division that puts out their young adult/teenager-oriented romance books. Harlequin will be handling the distribution of TENDER HEARTS as well, so you can expect to see TENDER HEARTS showing up in bookstores, supermarkets, drugstores, bus stations—anywhere paperback romances are sold, TENDER HEARTS will be available.

But there's more to the connection with Harlequin Silhouette than simply distribution. Some of the stories in the TENDER HEARTS series will be adaptations of prose novels published by Harlequin. Some, of course, will be original stories. Whether an adaptation or an original story, each book will read "somewhere in between a comic book and a paperback story," according

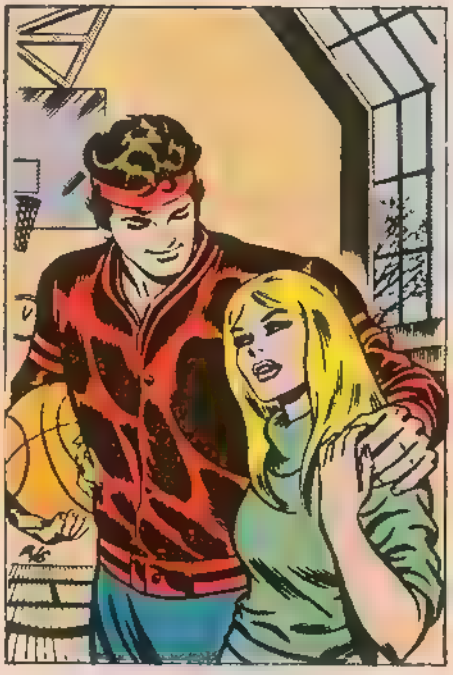
to series editor **Bob Budiansky**, "In that there's a lot of narration—less than a book, because a lot of the narration is descriptive, and is not necessary in a visual medium. They're 118 pages, but remember, the two or three panels per page make it a fairly quick read. It's more like the equivalent of two comics. Two, two-and-a-half."

Bob went on to describe the atmosphere of the book: "The general stories, adaptations of Silhouette Books or original scripts, revolve around people in their mid-to-late teens. They're all from a woman's point of view, the main character of the story—usually her finding some romantic adventure in some interesting environment. A lot of things happen. You always get deeply involved with the characters' friends, with her best friend if she has one, and the different guys in her life and the different rivalries that exist. It's definitely character-oriented. In all the stories we've done so far, the central character is there in virtually every panel, because it's all from her point of view."

Four books in the TENDER HEARTS series are under preparation, and if they meet with good reaction, the series will continue indefinitely.

The first book in the series is called BLUE RIBBON SUMMER. It's an adaptation of a Harlequin Silhouette novel. This TENDER HEARTS version is scripted by **Danny Fingeroth**, who's most recently known for the MARVEL SAGA series. The book was penciled by **Jackson Guice**, best known for his mutant art on X-FACTOR and NEW MUTANTS, and inked by **Vinnie Colletta** and **Mark McKenna**. The story revolves around a woman of about seventeen who spends a summer working as a teacher at a riding academy. Being there is a big change for her—for most of her life, she's been thought of as a child, and now she's in a position of responsibility. So she's caught midway between the young students and the adults who run the school. She has a lot of decisions to face, about growing up, about romance—and she's making her decisions on her own, for the first time.

The next one, LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT, is adapted by **Marc DeMatteis**, writer of Epic Comics' MOONSHADOW, and penciled by **Mary Wilshire**, whose work has been most recently seen in THE NEW MUTANTS and the FIRESTAR Limited Series, and inked by Vince Colletta. The story involves a young high school student. She meets a handsome basketball player, but their romance isn't without pitfalls. Both of



them have high school and its attendant responsibilities to deal with, and they're both involved in extracurricular activities—for her, various after-school jobs, and for him, the team. Their love seems to overwhelm everything else, but while that can be entrancing, it can also be very damaging to everything else in their lives.

The third book is an original script. It's called BLUE JAY OF HAPPINESS, and is written by **Louise Simonson** of POWER PACK and RED SONJA fame. It's penciled by **Mary Wilshire**, and inked by **Bob Wiacek**, whose inks you've seen on any number of Marvel projects, including POWER PACK and the X-MEN AND ALPHA FLIGHT Limited

Series. The story is about a city girl from New York who goes out to the country to live with relatives in a small town in Iowa. Being from New York, her fashion sense is a little different from the people around her—she's very trendy. Everybody considers her very wild, crazy, a good-timing girl, but that's not true—it's just the first impression she gives, because she's so different from the people in this conservative community. The story deals with her problems, her trying to get her new high school friends to take her for what she is and not just what she looks like, and of course, the romance she finds. When she gets involved with a young man who thinks she's something she's not, it would be very easy to fit his image rather than risk losing him—but she doesn't want to do that.

Bob describes the fourth book, DISCOVERIES, as "Kind of like a mirror image of BLUE JAY OF HAPPINESS, but it's not the same story." It's written by **Don Kraar**, with a very different approach from what you've seen him do in SAVAGE TALES and KING CONAN, drawn by **June Brigman**, of POWER PACK and inked by **Roy Richardson**. DISCOVERIES involves a young woman from Portland, Oregon, who comes to spend a year living with her godparents in New York City. She has ambitions to become a singer and actress, and has come to New York to go to the High School of Performing Arts. The intensity of school, the chance to work toward her career and the glamor of the city are a lot for her to deal with all at once. So when it comes to romance, she's a little blinded by the stars in her own eyes. She wants everything to be perfect, but she runs the risk of fooling herself into thinking it is, rather than dealing with what's really there

Budiansky is pleased with the way the books are coming out. "When I was presented with the project, my first reaction was to get the people who understood contemporary values, fashions and so on, to work on it," he says. He wanted a fresh, modern look and feel to the series, because nothing would be worse than having a contemporary romance series that wasn't convincing. But Bob felt that all the writers and artists involved were more than capable of handling the challenge, and he wasn't disappointed. "Mary Wilshire and June Brigman particularly, I was very happy to work with on it, because they're really in tune with style and the way people dress."

Despite the emphasis on a modern look and style, Bob also wanted the series to be grounded in history. "I wanted to get a kind

YOU STAY HERE, BLUE. THAT'S A GOOD BABY. I'LL BE HOME SOON
LAURA HONEY ABOUT THAT OUTFIT... ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO POLISH SILVERED BUT FROM THE STATES NOW IN THE FIRST DAY?
FROM WHAT I'VE SEEN THEY BE NARROW MINDED JERKS WHO'D WANT TO BE LIKE THEM ANYWAY?
I'D BOUGHT THIS OUTFIT TO WEAR ON FIRST DAY BACK AT JUILLIARD AND I NOW I SEE WHY SHOULD CHANGE JUST FOR THESE CRUMBS
BUT MAYBE JUST MAYBE I'D COME TOO FAR I MEAN THEY LOOKED OUT OF PLACE BUT
WHAT'S WITH HER? SHE LOOKS LIKE SHE'S FROM OUTER SPACE
I COULD'VE DIED
HI LAURA THAT STUFF YOU BE WEARING IT'S REAL INTERESTING HOW'S YOUR BLUE JAY?

of a classic romance look to it, as far as comics are concerned. So I immediately went to **John Romita** and asked him to do the cover layouts, to get that real classic look." As well as being Marvel's Art Director, and constantly called upon to design covers, specialty packages and the like, John has many years of experience doing romance comics, both for Marvel and elsewhere, and has built a solid reputation as one of the best romance artists ever in comics. To give a consistent style to the TENDER HEARTS series, John did layouts for all four covers, and **Joe Sinnott**, no slouch when it comes to either comics in general or romance comics in particular, provided the inks. For two of the books, BLUE RIBBON SUMMER and LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT, Joe was called on to work directly from John's layouts—to finish the pencils and ink the covers as well. For the other two, BLUE JAY OF HAPPINESS and DISCOVERIES, the penciler of the story (Mary Wilshire on BLUE JAY OF HAPPINESS, June Brigman on DISCOVERIES) was given John's layout to be fully rendered in pencil, in her own distinctive style. Joe Sinnott then inked both covers. Bob feels that the combination works well, combining the modern style of June and Mary with the classic design and linework of John and Joe.

Bob is also glad to see romance comics finally return. "There've been romance comics done in the past, and they were successful, but they haven't been done in a long time, and they haven't been done well for even longer."

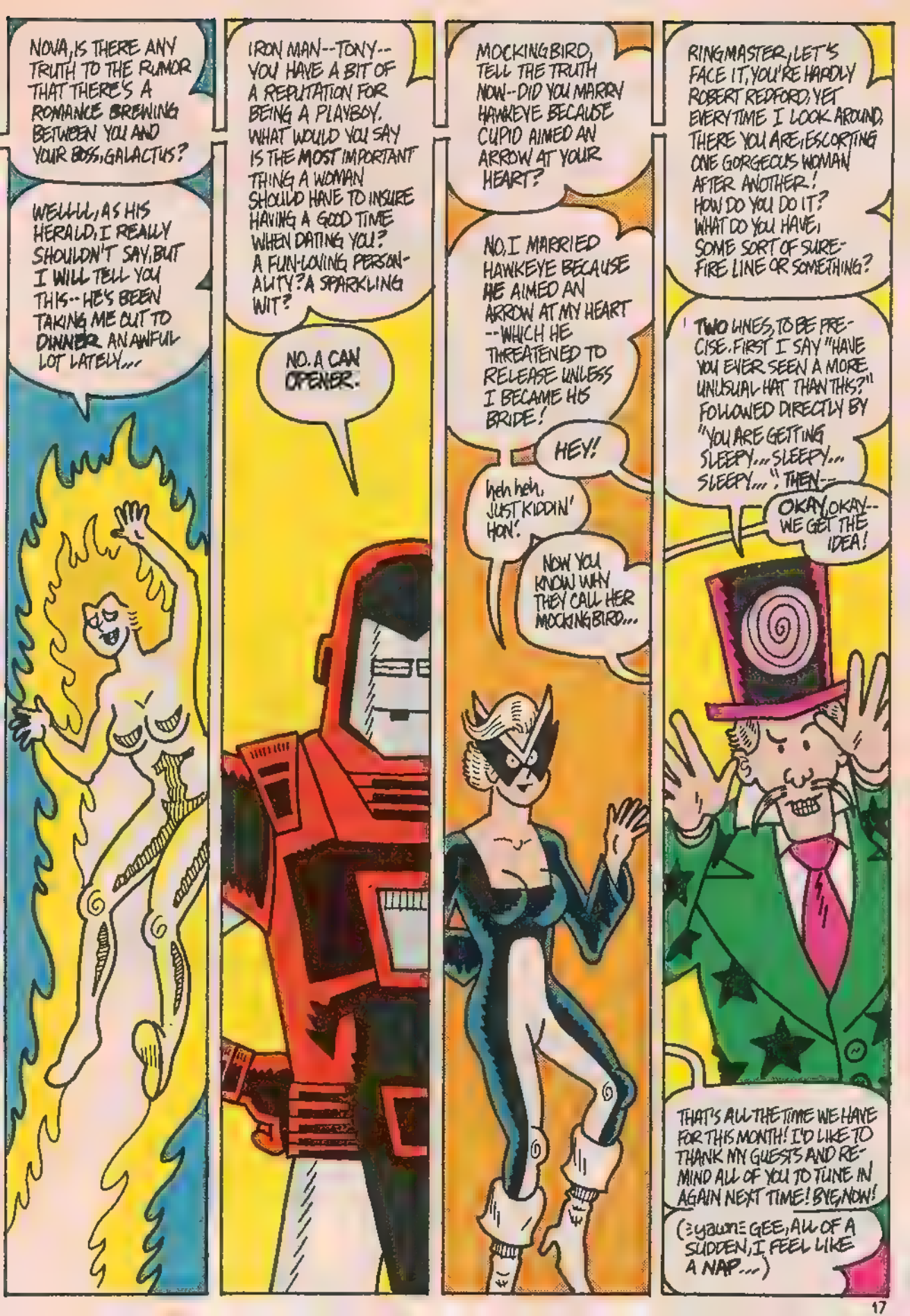
The publication of TENDER HEARTS is yet another example of Marvel's continuing efforts to bring comics to new segments of the public. The paperback format of the TENDER HEARTS series should make it appealing and accessible to anyone who has read and enjoyed Harlequin's regular romance paperbacks in the past, while the comics format will make it a new and different experience for those readers. And comics fans looking for a different kind of adventure might like them, too. Even for people who think romance is just mush, these books might make a great gift for a girlfriend or sister!

The tradition of romance comics goes back 40 years, and we're hoping that our updated-for-the-eighties version will prove as popular as romance itself! Watch for TENDER HEARTS this coming June or July—and see how *new* romance can be!

—Kurt Busiek

GREETINGS, EVERYONE! TODAY'S TOPIC IS A GOOD ONE. WE'LL BE DISCUSSING LOVE, MARRIAGE, ROMANCE AND MAYBE EVEN A LITTLE SEX-- WHAT'S IT LIKE IN THE MARVEL UNIVERSE? READ ON--YOU JUST MIGHT FIND OUT...
HEMBECK'S PAGE
PATSY WALKER--HELLCAT--WHEN YOU EMBARKED UPON THE SEA OF MATRIMONY WITH DAIMON HELLSTROM, the SON of SATAN, DID YOU FORSEE ANY PARTICULAIR OBSTACLES TO YOUR HAPPINESS?
MY BIGGEST PROBLEM HAD TO BE ADJUSTING TO MY NEW IN-LAWS, BUT, HECK, THAT'S JUST THE PRICE YOU PAY FOR A MARRIAGE MADE IN HELL.
SUE RICHARDS--INVISIBLE WOMAN--YOU'VE HAD A LONG AND HAPPY MARRIAGE TO REED RICHARDS, BETTER KNOWN TO US ALL AS MR. FANTASTIC. NOT EVEN THE HAPPIEST MARRIAGE IS WITHOUT ITS ROCKY MOMENTS, HOWEVER. TELL US, SUE, HAVE YOU EVER GOT INTO THE SORT OF ARGUMENTS THAT LEAD TO BANISHING YOUR HUBBY TO THE LIVING ROOM COUCH?
UH HUH. BUT WHAT WITH HIS STRETCHING ABILITIES--WELL, LET'S JUST SAY THERE ARE NIGHTS WHEN I'M PARTICULARLY THANKFUL FOR MY INVISIBLE FORCE FIELD...
4
DARE-DEVIL, YOU'VE HAD MORE INTIMATE RELATIONSHIPS THAN VIRTUALLY ANY OTHER MARVEL CHARACTER--KAREN PAGE, The BLACK WIDOW, HEATHER GLENN AND ELEKTRA, JUST TO NAME THE MOST OBVIOUS--HOW DO YOU EXPLAIN THIS PHENOMENON?
WELL, YOU KNOW THE OLD SAYING: "LOVE MAY BE BLIND, BUT IT DOES POSSESS A RADAR SENSE".
KA-ZAR--KEVIN--YOU'VE ENJOYED CONNUBIAL BLISS FOR SOME TIME NOW. WHAT WOULD YOU VENTURE TO SAY IS THE MOST UNIQUE ASPECT OF YOUR MARRIAGE TO SHANNA?
I'D HAVE TO SAY IT'S PROBABLY THE FACT THAT I'M THE ONLY HUSBAND IN THE WORLD WHOSE WIFE APPRECIATES IT WHEN HE CALLS HER "SHE-DEVIL"!

 FRED HEMBECK © 1986 Fred Hembeck


NOVA, IS THERE ANY TRUTH TO THE RUMOR THAT THERE'S A ROMANCE BREWING BETWEEN YOU AND YOUR BOSS, GALACTUS?
WELLLL, AS HIS HERALD, I REALLY SHOULDN'T SAY, BUT I WILL TELL YOU THIS-- HE'S BEEN TAKING ME OUT TO DINNER AN AWFUL LOT LATELY...
IRON MAN--TONY-- YOU HAVE A BIT OF A REPUTATION FOR BEING A PLAYBOY. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY IS THE MOST IMPORTANT THING A WOMAN SHOULD HAVE TO INSURE HAVING A GOOD TIME WHEN DATING YOU? A FUN-LOVING PERSONALITY? A SPARKLING WIT?
NO. A CAN OPENER.
MOCKINGBIRD, TELL THE TRUTH NOW-- DID YOU MARRY HAWKEYE BECAUSE CUPID AIMED AN ARROW AT YOUR HEART?
NO, I MARRIED HAWKEYE BECAUSE HE AIMED AN ARROW AT MY HEART --WHICH HE THREATENED TO RELEASE UNLESS I BECAME HIS BRIDE!
HEY!
heh heh, JUST KIDDIN' HON!
NOW YOU KNOW WHY THEY CALL HER MOCKINGBIRD...
RINGMASTER, LET'S FACE IT, YOU'RE HARDLY ROBERT REDFORD; YET EVERY TIME I LOOK AROUND, THERE YOU ARE, ESCORTING ONE GORGEOUS WOMAN AFTER ANOTHER! HOW DO YOU DO IT? WHAT DO YOU HAVE, SOME SORT OF SURE-FIRE LINE OR SOMETHING?
TWO LINES, TO BE PRECISE. FIRST I SAY "HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A MORE UNUSUAL HAT THAN THIS?" FOLLOWED DIRECTLY BY "YOU ARE GETTING SLEEPY... SLEEPY... SLEEPY...". THEN--
OKAY, OKAY-- WE GET THE IDEA!
THAT'S ALL THE TIME WE HAVE FOR THIS MONTH! I'D LIKE TO THANK MY GUESTS AND REMIND ALL OF YOU TO TUNE IN AGAIN NEXT TIME! BYE, NOW!
(yawn GEE, ALL OF A SUDDEN, I FEEL LIKE A NAP...)

Joe Team Takes On

SPECIAL MISSIONS

Are you looking for all-out action? Is blazing adventure something you crave? Then get ready for the spectacular G.I. JOE 50th Anniversary issue that takes all of the action and adventure that the Joe Team can muster and multiplies it by two! You heard right. G.I. JOE #50 will be twice as big, twice as exciting, twice as fun, and will contain—hold on to your Jump Jet Pack—twice as many stories!

The issue starts out with a regular 22-page Joe tale, and then presents the 18-page debut of the all-new G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS Book! Written by **Larry Hama** and penciled and inked by **Herb Trimpe**, SPECIAL MISSIONS is a great way to get into the world of G.I. Joe, and it's more of what makes the regular series so popular.

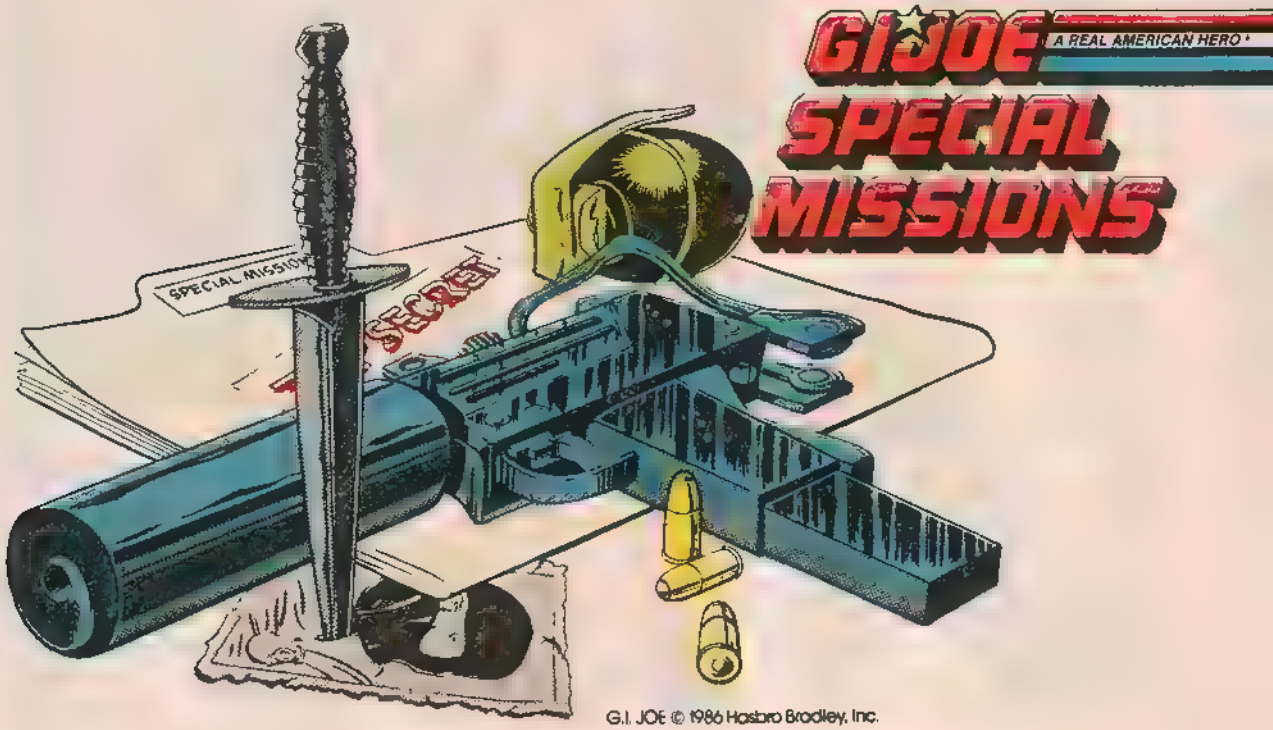
"SPECIAL MISSIONS starts as a back-up story in the giant-sized G.I. JOE #50 and then becomes a regular bi-monthly comic," explained Larry. It will feature the same characters everyone has come to know on the Joe Team, but the main difference in the books is that SPECIAL MISSIONS will have stories that are totally self-contained in each issue. "We'll feature smaller, more specialized units of Joes concentrating on a very specific task or mission for that particular issue. And it will end there. There won't be any continuing stories," said Larry.

The regular G.I. JOE book has been one long continuous story right from the beginning. SPECIAL MISSIONS will provide a vehicle for stories that take place outside that continuity.

"The few times that we did do stories like this in G.I. JOE, we got letters complaining that we weren't following the continuity," explained Larry. "Now, with two books, JOE will feature the big, on-going story and SPECIAL MISSIONS will be one-shot side stories about other things the Joes have to do."

Editor **Bob Harras** explained that SPECIAL MISSIONS will focus on particular teams of the G.I. Joe characters. "It will be mainly one-shot, self-contained stories. In MISSIONS we will be focusing more on the characters and on special events that they must deal with. G.I. JOE has a lot of continuity going all the way back to issue #1, but this new book will be the type of comic where you can pick up one issue, get a complete story, and get to know the smaller group of Joes involved," said Bob.

The whole concept behind the special back-up story and the new series is, of course, special missions. The Joes will take on these particular missions and they must take care of them quickly. Missions in the early issues will



G.I. JOE © 1986 Hasbro Bradley, Inc.

include rescuing a hijacked airplane, recovering an American submarine, and dealing with Nazis in South America. And, no doubt, Cobra will have its hand in more than a few of these missions, as well.

"The main thrust of the initial story in G.I. JOE #50 is that the Joe Team is called in to rescue a Russian airliner that has been hijacked," explained Larry. "On board will be the American chess team which is on its way to Moscow for a tournament. And that's just the beginning."

Another early mission will involve the Joes in the rescue-and-recovery of an American nuclear submarine that has gone down in the Baltic Sea. "The Baltic Sea is basically a Russian pond," said Larry. "This presents the first problem. The second problem takes the form of Cobra. Cobra will be a big part of this series."

This mission will deal with a triangle involving Cobra, the Russians, and the Joes. Another story that will pit the team against Cobra centers around an old World War II German airplane which is full of nerve gas and is about to crash into the sea. Can the Joes get to it before it cracks open? Can they get there before the dreaded forces of Cobra? That's what the series will be all about.

"What it is is very intense missions that the Joe Team has to take care of in a very specific amount of time. Later on we'll be dealing with Nazis in South America and whether or not the U.S. makes a deal with them for the greater good. It's things like that that will typify SPECIAL MISSIONS," said Bob.

Penciler and inker Herb Trimpe is no stranger to the world of G.I. JOE. He was the original artist on the series when it started 50 issues ago! He is excited about returning to these characters. "I'm already famil-

lar with many of the characters and with the general atmosphere of the book. I like to draw this kind of stuff, especially aircraft. It's fun to do," said Herb.

Herb explained SPECIAL MISSIONS from his point of view as artist. "It's a smaller scope in a way, limiting the number of characters involved in each story. Characters will change in every issue, depending on the nature of the mission, but we won't be running around with 13 or 14 people every time out like in G.I. JOE. SPECIAL MISSIONS is roughly comparable to a general practitioner and a specialist. The regular series is the general practitioner and SPECIAL MISSIONS gets down to the more precisely surgical operations."

Herb is always looking to be involved with a series that is semi-realistic as far as outfits, clothing, and hardware go. "The hi-tech part is great. I love drawing that stuff and I wish the series had even more of it! I love drawing gadgets that do weird and amazing things," said Herb.

Herb gets along tremendously well with Larry and enjoys working with him. "I'm free to contribute ideas and Larry has asked my opinion on a number of things. But I have to step aside to Larry in regards to expertise in much of this area. I may have him beat on vintage airplanes, but Larry knows everything or can find it out in regards to technology. Weaponry, hardware—he's a walking Pentagon advisor," he said.

"Let's face it, I like to draw battles and combat. I wouldn't want to be in a tank in combat, but it's kind of fun to draw," said Herb.

And all of this kicks off in the G.I. JOE 50th Anniversary issue. "That issue is a celebration and deserves to be something very special," said Bob. "The best way we could do this is by kicking off another series in that issue. The Joes are so intensely popular that one book isn't enough to satisfy the fans and tell all the stories we want to tell. So that's why we're creating G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS."

Larry Hama is totally enjoying himself with the Joe stories. "It's the type of stuff I like to write about. From the types of characters to the types of technology to the types of stories they get involved in, I am having fun," said Larry.

To what does he attribute the amazing popularity of the characters and the series? "It's the way the characters relate to each other and what they stand for that generates why people like them. Contrary to uninformed popular opinion, there's not an awful lot of flag-waving going on. The motivation of the members of the Joe Team—of all the charac-

...THIS APPLIES TO AMERICAN AIRCRAFT AS WELL!
NEGATIVE ON THAT, FLOGGER LEADER! WE WILL STAND BY TO INSURE SAFETY OF AMERICAN PASSENGERS ON BOARD!
I REPEAT. ALTER COURSE TO BEARING--
I WANNA BE AN AIRBORNE RANGER, I WANNA LIVE A LIFE OF DANGER...
CRAWL-SPACE. PASSENGER COMPARTMENT MUST BE RIGHT ABOVE...

ters—is very precise. Their loyalty is very precise as well. I think that that's the major fantasy that appeals to most of our readers. Unlike other comic book characters, the Joes know what they want and they know how to go about doing it. They are self-confident and loyal to their friends. These are fantastic elements in today's society and it's very appealing. They function the way you'd like your friends to function. It has a lot to do with support within the group, with friendship, and with a team working together toward a common goal. These are very appealing concepts to our readers," said Larry.

Do you have a special mission that needs doing? How about an impossible task that must be accomplished? Do you want a small team of specialists involved, complete with the most modern hi-tech equipment? Then you want the world of G.I. JOE and the new G.I. JOE SPECIAL MISSIONS. Now this team of Real American Heroes will be battling Cobra and other world menaces in two exciting books! And it all begins with G.I. JOE #50's gala giant-sized celebration! Don't miss it!

—Bill Slavicsek

The world of high fashion is a world populated by the glamorous, the famous, and the wealthy. But all too often, wealth and fame have their price! And when the moguls of the fashion world become well-dressed targets, that's when they turn to DAKOTA NORTH INVESTIGATIONS!

"Dakota North is a sort of private eye/bodyguard/security expert working in the fashion industry," explains DAKOTA NORTH's creator and editor, **Larry Hama**. "She's got offices in New York, Paris, Rome, and Tokyo, and she's sort of a weird cross between DYNASTY and **Emma Peel** (the classy self-defense expert from the 1960's television program THE AVENGERS). It's a very chic, *moderne* series with plenty of action!"

Ironically, the all-new, bimonthly series started out to be something far different. "It started out as FASHION AVENUE which was going to be a romance strip about models," Larry explains. "But somewhere along the way, I said, 'Hold it, this is 1985!' Models have a very non-assertive image, and I wanted to do a female character who was more assertive and a real go-getter. I wanted her to be a different sort of role model. **Dakota North** is not **Millie the Model**!"

She certainly isn't! At least, not unless Millie has started taking up .45 automatics and chasing criminals through the skating rink at New York's Rockefeller Center!

While DAKOTA NORTH is about a woman who's as tough as they come, it's also very much about the glamor and excitement of the fashion industry. It was for this reason that Larry, after considering a number of writers for the series, finally settled on relative newcomer **Martha Thomases**!

Unless you remember her work on Marvel's CRAZY MAGAZINE or the series of "Futureview" columns she and her husband, **John Robert Tebbel**, wrote for EPIC ILLUSTRATED, Martha's name may be unfamiliar to you. But New Yorkers know her for the "Style" column she writes regularly for the City's hippest major newspaper, THE VILLAGE VOICE! And it was largely because of this column that Larry asked her to write DAKOTA NORTH! "I figured it would be easier to teach someone who knew about that kind of stuff to do action-adventure material than it'd be to teach an action-adventure writer about clothes," Larry says.

The opportunity to write DAKOTA NORTH came at a time when Martha was submitting a number of proposals to Marvel, including one for a soap-opera-type series drawn by NEW MUTANTS penciler, **Mary Wilshire**. Martha and Larry fleshed out most of the series' characters together, and she is thrilled with the chance that Larry's given her! "I've been reading comics since before I could read!" Martha says. "Writing DAKOTA NORTH is a lot of fun!"

An attraction for Martha is that her background gives her a unique perspective on the series. "I don't usually walk down the street and have to pull out a gun and

shoot someone, but I do know a lot of fashion designers, artists, writers, and so on! I'm trying to bring that into DAKOTA NORTH without being too 'inside' about it." And she finds that being a woman helps immeasurably in writing a series starring a woman. "The problem that you find all too often with female characters written by men is that they explain themselves too much—'I'm an independent woman and that's why I'm doing this!' I *am* an independent woman, and I don't think that way!" She is determined to make Dakota North "a fun character but also a believable human."

Martha has known Larry for years, ever since he first wrote for her now-defunct magazine, COMEDY, and she has nothing but respect for his ability as an editor and storyteller! "I've learned a lot from Larry! I don't know how much you'd have to pay to learn all the stuff he's been teaching me!"

She is also highly impressed with the fine work that artist Tony Salmons has been doing on DAKOTA NORTH! Tony's artwork has the flash and style the series needs, and Martha finds only one problem with his work: "It's so good that I don't want to cover it with word balloons! I end up writing as little dialogue as I can, and showing the pages to my husband. If John can understand them, I show them to Larry!"

The cast is not the sort you find every day, and neither are the stories! "We come in at the middle of Dakota's life," Martha says. "She'd tried being a freelance security guard, but hadn't been very successful. She gets her first big job — protecting a designer who'd been getting threats. They turn out to be part of a plot by these big international bad guys. But while Dakota saves the designer, it's not her job to figure out who's behind the threats." Dakota's job is an incredibly varied one, and in the issues to come, she'll be working on a wide range of assignments, including protecting an old friend of her father's; it seems he's written a book which certain people would prefer stay unpublished! And in issue #3, Dakota will head for Paris to find Ricky after he runs off with an "older woman"—a sixteen-year-old model!

A lot of effort is being spent on making DAKOTA NORTH an extremely unusual series, and as such, it features an extremely unusual cast! No sooner has Dakota managed to get her agency off the ground than she suddenly finds herself saddled with taking care of her teenage, ultra-hip brother, **Ricky**! "Imagine what that would do to your life!" Martha laughs. While Dakota and Ricky might seem to be an odd pair of offspring, though, their father makes them look tame! It isn't quite clear if their father worked for the C.I.A. and O.S.S., but he sure seems to have a lot of strange friends and contacts! And rounding out the cast is Dakota's assistant **Mad Dog**, who has an insatiable passion for fast motorcycles and classic '50's automobiles!

"Dakota's rates are high, so she tends to get very glamorous assign-

LUKE! START THE CAR UP AND LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! I'LL HOLD THEM OFF AS LONG AS YOU NEED!
UH, DAKOTA, I SEEM TO HAVE MISPLACED THE KEYS!
THEY BETTER BE ON THE GROUND, NOT INSIDE. LOOK FOR THEM

ments," Martha notes. And considering that she keeps offices in four of the most glamorous and exciting cities in the world, glamor, thrills, and a whole lot of globetrotting are assured for the series.

DAKOTA NORTH will feature something for everyone! Larry says, "She's a strong, independent, upbeat, positive character; she knows who and what she is and where she's going!" For those more interested in reading about the lifestyles of the rich and famous, he points out that the series is loaded with "fancy, artsy cars and restaurants. It's very fashionable." Add in a touch of romance with a handsome police officer and a heaping helping of action and adventure, and you end up with something everybody can enjoy! As Larry put it, "If you like MIAMI VICE, you'll like DAKOTA NORTH!"

—*Shelly Fisch*

BRAK BRAK
THAT'S FAR ENOUGH, OTTO...
IF YOUR FATHER COULDN'T STOP ME, MISS NORTH, YOU DON'T HAVE A PRAYER.
THAT WAS COOL, DAKOTA.
IT WOULD BE COOLER IF WE KNEW WHO HE WORKED FOR.
TOO BAD HE DIDN'T KILL HER AT LEAST I WON'T HAVE TO PAY HIS EXORBITANT FEE.
WE'LL MEET AGAIN, MS NORTH, AND YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS

When Groo roamed the land, a warrior lived by his swords and his courage.

Brains were an optional extra.

At
newsstands everywhere.
Monthly. From Marvel Comics'
Epic Line.

GROO THE WANDERER: TM & © 1986 Sergio Aragonés
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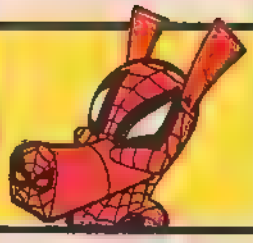
STAR SPOTLIGHT



PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM™

It's funny how history sometimes repeats itself. As you may know, **Stan Lee** wrote his first **Spider-Man** story for a book slated to be canceled—AMAZING FANTASY #15. It was something he wanted to do even if it turned out that Spider-Man would just be a one-shot. That's the way it was with **Spider-Ham. Jim Shooter** and **Tom DeFalco** wanted to do a funny animal book, and put editor **Larry Hama** in charge of the project. **Joe Albelo** suggested doing Spider-Man as a pig, **Mark Armstrong** designed him, and Spider-Ham was born! An issue of MARVEL TAILS was produced, with Larry editing, Tom writing, Mark penciling and Joe inking. They never expected it to be anything more than a one-shot, but Spider-Ham like Spider-Man caught on and now his many fans can thrill to his bi-monthly adventures in Star Comics' PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM.

SPIDER-HAM relates the adventures of Peter Porker, a photographer for the Daily Beagle, who has the proportionate strength of a spider. The Beagle is run by the cantankerous **J. Jonah Jackal**. While the basic premise strongly resembles that of Spider-Man, **Steve Mellor** insists, "It's not just a Spider-Man satire." And he should know. As the new writer on the book, Steve will be guiding the future adventures of our porcine hero.

"If we were just satirizing the super heroes," Steve explained to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, "we would run out of steam pretty fast. In SPIDER-HAM, I try to make the characters exist on their own. I try to satirize issues of the day rather than just poking fun at our heroes. Readers shouldn't have to read DAREDEVIL number whatever to enjoy the book."

To illustrate the point, SPIDER-HAM #5 poked fun at the current youth culture. Two plot threads were weaved throughout the issue. One dealt with a new young owner of the Daily Beagle firing all the old timers, including good old J. Jonah Jackal. In a hilarious scene where Peter Porker tries to quit in protest, it is Jonah who refuses to let him out of his contract. The other plot thread dealt with Spider-Ham's run-in with the villainous **Senior Simians**. While there were serious overtones to the story, there was also plenty of the action and humor that Spider-Ham fans have grown to expect.

In future issues Steve plans to satirize some popular movies. You can look forward to seeing Spidey battle **Hogzilla** and have a close encounter with a very dangerous **ET**.

Doing humor/satire is not new to Steve. Prior to taking on SPIDER-HAM he had worked for **Larry Hama** on another Marvel humor book—CRAZY MAGAZINE. Fans of CRAZY might remember his work on **the Kinetic Kids** feature.

When Larry started editing Star Comics' PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM, he assigned Steve to the back-up features. These back-ups featured satires of various Marvel characters including: **Goose Rider, Thrr, the Dog of Thunder** (who had a penchant for chasing cars), **Awful Flight** (with **Steve Skeates**) and **the X-Bugs** (who may get a limited series of their own if you demand it!). Future issues will feature **the Silver Squirrel** and a very special story—**Submarsupial** vs. **the Asinine Torch**, a tale reminiscent of the initial **Submariner/Human Torch** clash way back in MARVEL MYSTERY #8–10 (June–August 1940).

Joe Albelo, who has inked every Spider-Ham story from his first appearance in MARVEL TAILS, will also be doing some penciling on the book. Joe is also an alumnus of CRAZY MAGAZINE, having done production and design work on that book. He also wrote and drew a piece entitled "What If Charles Schulz Drew Star Wars," featuring **Luke Skywalker** and the rest of the Star Wars crowd drawn like the Peanuts gang.

Joe had always loved both humor and adventure, so he finds SPIDER-HAM, which contains elements of both, to be the ideal book for him. He's having a lot of fun working on it, and feels that in a humorous comic he's given a lot of freedom to draw funny things in the backgrounds and just generally be nutty.

Steve is enjoying himself as well. "It's fun," he told MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. "You get to use your sense of humor. I like funny stuff."

If you like "funny stuff" too, you should look no further. The bi-monthly adventures of the pig with the powers of a spider should tickle your funny bone *and* keep you on the edge of your chair. So pick up a copy of PETER PORKER, THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-HAM and enjoy!

—Sandy Hausler

THE MARVEL AGE

MARVEL 25TH ANNIVERSARY

Welcome back! Last time, this column featured the 1971 adventures of DAREDEVIL, IRON MAN, THE FANTASTIC FOUR, and THE HULK, climaxing in the debut of the Defenders in the pages of MARVEL FEATURE. This time, we'll look at the prelude to that first Defenders story and more excitement than you can shake a Cosmic Cube at!

1971 was truly a year of landmarks for the Marvel titles at the end of the alphabet. THOR reached issue #200, SPIDER-MAN reached #100 after breaking new ground in a special three-part story, and for **Prince Namor**, the SUB-MARINER, the year was one of joy and tragedy.

The year began on a happy note, however, for the SUB-MARINER, courtesy of writer **Roy Thomas** and artist **Sal Buscema**. In the wake of a plot by **Warlord Krang**, **Prince Byrrah**, and **Dr. Dorcas** to take over the Atlantean throne, Namor finally proposed to his beloved **Lady Dorma**! And to absolutely no one's surprise, she accepted happily! Their engagement was a short one, but it was long enough for Namor to handle a menace or two before the wedding! The U.N. had sponsored the building of an experimental nuclear weather-control station, but the Atlantean scientist **Ikthon** discovered that once the station was activated, it would become a massive bomb, threatening Atlanteans and surface-dwellers alike! Namor set out to warn the scientists working on it, but he realized that he alone did not have the power to make them listen, so he recruited the aid of the **Silver Surfer** and the **Incredible Hulk**! Unfortunately, the U.N. had enlisted **the Avengers**' help in guarding the device, and the Avengers misperceived the trio as a threat. A massive battle broke out, but Namor and his Atlanteans finally managed to convince the scientists of the danger and all ended well. Namor, the Surfer, and the Hulk went their separate ways, none suspecting that they would soon reunite as members of the dynamic Defenders! A new super-team was the last thing on Namor's mind, though, as he returned to Atlantis for his wedding! Despite an attack by **Attuma**, the

wedding proceeded as planned, but "Dorma" turned out to be Namor's enemy **Llyra** in disguise! Luckily, the nature of the ceremony was such that Namor was legally married to the real Dorma, not Llyra, but before Namor could find where Llyra had hidden her, Llyra drained the water from Dorma's prison! Namor arrived just in time for Dorma to die in his arms, only hours after they'd been married! Namor, mourning his lost love, reviewed his past and came to the conclusion that he'd been to blame for much of the strife between Atlantis and the surface world! He abdicated his throne at Dorma's funeral and left to live among the surface dwellers. The ex-prince found himself far from welcome on the surface, though, and the Army destroyed the New York home he'd built! Namor might have been driven into a rampage by this, but he was stopped by an old newspaper article found by his friend, **Diane Arliss**—an article which suggested that Namor's human father might still be alive! The trail to **Captain Leonard MacKenzie** led his hybrid son through battles with the other-worldly tyrant, **Turalla** (aided by the ever-amazing **Spider-Man**), **Aunt Serr** (who'd turned an entire town into monsters), and **Tuval, the Mind Master**. Finally, the trail led to Boston, but as Namor searched, he didn't know that Llyra and **Tiger Shark** were also in town looking for his father! Would Llyra kill Namor's father as well? We'd find out in 1972!

SPIDER-MAN's year began with tragedy, too. His girlfriend **Gwen's** father had been killed by **Dr. Octopus**, and Spider-Man found himself blamed for the death by everyone from **Iceman** to the **Prowler** to Gwen herself! Gwen left New York to live with relatives in England, and after a brief battle with **the Beetle**, Peter Parker followed. But when Peter got to London, he came across a band of terrorists and

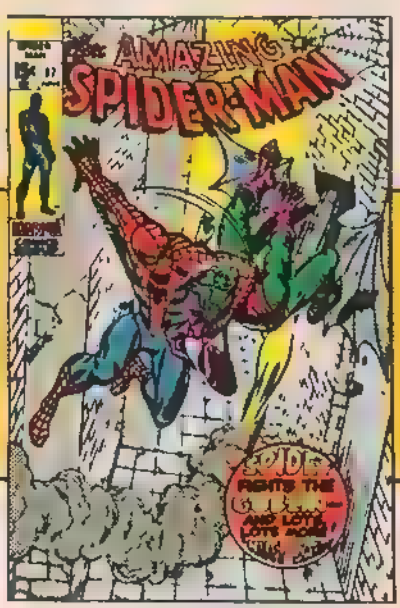
was forced to fight them as Spider-Man! Realizing that he couldn't let Gwen know that both Peter and Spider-Man had come to England, he left without seeing her. But when he returned to New York, Spider-Man found himself confronted with a different sort of crisis in a classic story by writer **Stan Lee** and artists **John Romita, Gil Kane, Frank Giacoia,** and **Tony Mortellaro**. Peter discovered that his roommate, **Harry Osborn**, who'd been increasingly depressed and on edge, had become hooked on drugs and had taken an accidental overdose! Peter rushed him to the hospital just in time, and Harry survived, but Peter couldn't hang around—he had to capture Harry's father, **the Green Goblin**! At the time this story was published in SPIDER-MAN #96–98, the Comics Code forbade any mention of drugs in a comic book, even if they were shown to be dangerous and destructive. Stan Lee courageously decided to publish the story anyway, without the Code's approval! As a result, the Code's adminstrators realized the value of such stories and the Code was finally changed! The webslinger's creative team was just warming up, though, because no sooner had Gwen returned and Spidey helped stop a prison riot than they shocked the world with SPIDER-MAN #100! Peter had grown disenchanted with his double life and decided to quit being Spider-Man and propose to Gwen. He took an untested, experimental serum to rid himself of his powers, but its effects were not exactly what he wanted. He hallucinated about his friends and greatest foes, but his greatest horror came when he awoke and saw that the serum had given him four extra arms! As a *real* Spider-Man, he fought **Morbius the Living Vampire**, the victim of a rare disease which turned him into a vampire! The wall-crawler beat Morbius with the help of an unusual ally, **the Lizard**, and the Lizard's alter-ego, **Dr. Curt Connors**, helped get rid of Spidey's extra arms. No sooner was Spider-Man back to normal, though, than he rushed to the Savage Land to help **Ka-Zar** battle **Kraven the Hunter** and the giant monster **Gog**!

Monumental events were also the rule in THOR! As the year began, **Odin** was worried. He sent **Thor, Sif,** and **the Warriors Three** off on quests to keep them away from Asgard. It seemed that **Loki** had freed **Mangog**, who was determined to bring about Ragnarok, the Twilight of the Gods! With the younger gods safely away, Odin and the elder gods waged a mighty battle against Mangog, but when it was over, Odin lay defeated! Thor returned just in time with water from the Twilight Well at the end of the universe, and when **Volstagg** added the water to Odin's Cosmic Well, the All-Father was revived long enough to defeat Mangog. But the effort was too much for Odin, and it cost him his life! Both **Hela** and **Pluto** came forth to claim his soul, and a small war broke out between them—and Thor was caught in the middle! Observing the struggle caused the all-knowing **Norns** to look forward to the time of Ragnarok, and THOR #200 gave readers a glimpse of the end of the world—and the end of the gods! Thor would wrestle with the Midgard Serpent, destroying the Earth, and eventually, even the gods would be destroyed, leaving only the evil fire-demon **Surtur**! Back in the present, meanwhile, Hela had come to the conclusion that neither she nor Pluto could win their dispute, so she restored Odin's life. Thor was grateful, but with his father safe, he rushed off to help Sif against the menace of **Ego-Prime** as Ego tried to turn Earth into a living planet like himself! Ego left the Earth, but Sif and the Warriors Three were kidnapped by **Mephisto** in an attempt to corrupt Thor's soul! (It seemed that *every* THOR villain was after someone's soul in 1971!) Thor fought mightily, but in the end, it was his refusal to kill an innocent person which saved him from Mephisto's clutches! He left Mephisto's netherworld and returned to Earth where he was confronted with Loki's latest scheme—the return of **the Absorbing Man**!

Whew! That's an awful lot of milestones to squeeze into one year! But if you think that was tough, be here next time when we move on to 1972 to look at AVENGERS #100, CAPTAIN AMERICA & THE FALCON #150, and a new series for one of the original X-Men!

See you then!

—*Shelly Fisch*



Send your letters to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE, c/o Marvel Comics Group, 387 Park Avenue South, New York, New York, 10016

Our title this month comes courtesy of *Jason Beaumont*, who hails from *Lexington, Kentucky*. Thanks, Jason. And that seems like a good cue to remind one and all that this column is named each month by the readers. Send in your ideas for titles! If your suggestion is chosen, you get the almost indescribable thrill of seeing your title atop this page, and your own name in the paragraph below it! (All right, so it's not a trip to Bermuda—but it is a permanent spot in Marvel history.) So think 'em up and send 'em in! Send before midnight tonight! Do it today!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

A few issues back, I heard about an upcoming team-up of Top Dog and Spider-Man. Come on! Get serious! Top Dog is from Star Comics! Star Comics are unrealistic. Spider-Man is from Marvel Comics. And Marvel Comics is realistic! It is impossible for this to happen! This is going too far! Come on! You guys can do better than this. Or can you? If this team-up happens, many of us Marvel readers won't ever take you seriously again!

By the way, I hope Jean Grey is really back (check FF #286). Please don't treat your readers like they are stupid. What I mean is don't have Jean Grey turn out to be a Skrull or something impersonating Jean. All of this is a major development in the Marvel Universe. It is really one hell of a story. After all of the years (and issues of X-MEN) gone by, we never knew Phoenix wasn't actually Jean Grey.

Until this story is false and this isn't the real Jean Grey, make mine Marvel!

Elroy Butler
P.O. Box 752
Kamuela, Hawaii 96743

It could be wondered why a man who sticks to walls is more realistic than a talking dog, but we know what you mean. Still, we think it would be a bad idea to artificially limit ourselves by building barriers between different genres. Did you see the episode of ST. ELSEWHERE last season where some of the characters from that series (a drama) wandered into the bar from CHEERS (a comedy) and met some of the CHEERS characters? We thought that worked out pretty well. You can breathe easy, though: The planned Top Dog/Spider-Man crossover has been shelved, at least for the near future.

And yes, that is the real Jean Grey.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I collect a number of Marvel titles and I can tell you now that Marvel has never looked better. With artists and writers like **John Byrne, Bill Mantlo** and **Art Adams**, you couldn't do better.

Just a few suggestions:

1) Dedicate an issue of MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE just to make lists of different types. For example, *The Ten Most Powerful Beings In The Universe* or *The Ten Strongest Humanoids On Earth*

2) Dedicate a few pages to have a vote for your readers. You could ask questions like: Who is your favorite super hero? or Who is the most beautiful woman in comics?

Thanks for listening. Until the Watcher grows hair or Wolverine drinks lemonade, make mine Marvel!

Guy Barker
Sandy, Utah

Interesting suggestions, *Guy*. We kind of think the first one is covered by THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE, which we're trying to make the definitive sourcebook on information like that, but that doesn't mean MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE can't overlap with THE HANDBOOK a little. What do all you other Marvel fans think? Should we run some lists? Should we have more write-in features? If so, what? Write and let us know, okay?

Dear Marvel,

I am a fifteen year old girl who reads and collects comics. I recently went to a comics convention where I got MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE #32. I was skipping through it when I came upon a letter written to you from a girl in Canada, talking about how people think girls don't read comics.

I think she was totally right! Every time I tell people that I collect comics, they look at me like I'm from Mars and say, "Only boys read comics!" For a while I was convinced that they were right. But thanks to **Marisa Antonello**, I know they're wrong!

My favorite comics are G.I. JOE and INDIANA JONES. I also really liked the ICEMAN and LONGSHOT Limited Series. I hope that my letter, like Marisa's, will get some response from girl collectors—and guys!

Diane Fernandez
1146 McClintock Dr.
Mansfield, OH 44906

Congratulations, *Diane*, for sticking to your guns (or to your comics, anyway). We got a lot of response to Marisa's letter, all of it positive. There are a lot more female fans out there than most people would suspect—and we hope this letter will inspire some of them to write to you.

And now, let's take a few questions . . .

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

What happened to MOON KNIGHT? I was reading a newsletter I got from a company I order from and it said that MOON KNIGHT was canceled as of #6. I said to myself, "No way—not when MOON KNIGHT #7 and #8 are listed in the order form!" I was wrong—the next month, when I got my order form, MOON KNIGHT wasn't listed. I would like to know why MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE didn't list this cancellation. You didn't even finish off with a good story! You should have had **Moon Knight's** powers taken away. I am a big fan of almost all your comics, and MOON KNIGHT was my second favorite (SPIDER-MAN is #1).

Carl King
RR 1 Box 379
Herrin, IL 62948

The decision to cancel MOON KNIGHT was made very quickly, and by the time we knew about it and could have put an item in the *Newswatch* section, the series had already ended. Sorry about that.

But if you're such a big fan of Moon Knight, why do you want him to lose his powers? As it is, he's only lost his series—he's not dead or anything. In fact, Moon Knight will be appearing in an issue or two of MARVEL FANFARE—which he couldn't do if he'd lost his powers. So keep your eyes peeled—just because a series is canceled doesn't mean you'll never see the character again. After all, THE ETERNALS, THE HULK, DOCTOR STRANGE and even THE X-MEN were canceled in the past, and look at 'em now!

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Will **Reed** and **Susan Richards** ever discover their son **Franklin Richards'** secret dream powers and the fact that he's a member of the **Power Pack**? Also, will we Marvel fans ever find out who is killing the Marvel super-villains such as the **Melter**, the **Enforcer**, the **Miracle Man** and **Megatak**? "Justice Is Served!"

Kenneth Watson
1080 43d Street
Emeryville, CA 94608

It certainly is, *Kenneth*. To answer your questions in order: 1) Maybe. FANTASTIC FOUR and POWER PACK are the series to watch. 2) Definitely. Things are coming to a head in CAPTAIN AMERICA right now.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I have a few questions that I want to be answered:

1) I saw a G.I. JOE cartoon recently and I saw **Steve Gerber** listed as writer. Is this the same Steve Gerber that used to write for Marvel in the Seventies?

2) I saw a WUZZLES cartoon recently and I saw **Mark Evanier** listed as writer. Is this the same Mark Evanier that does something or other on GROO?

3) Where are the SILVER SURFER, S.H.I.E.L.D., SPELLBINDER and DOC SAMSON Limited Series?

Dan Bass
909 Sunnymeade
DeKalb, IL 60115

1) You bet. 2) None other. 3) In the works, in the works, in the works, and Doc Samson's limited series was only mentioned as a joke in Fred Hembeck's page in MARVEL AGE #20, and as an example of a *possible* Limited Series in a recent letters page. No actual Samson series is being planned, *Dan*.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

Can Wolverine's claws penetrate the **Hulk's** skin? Is there going to be a SECRET WARS III comic book? (If so, you should make it another series with everyone in it, even the **Transformers** and **G.I. Joe**.)

I am really writing to tell you guys that MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE is a great comic. *The Mutant Report* is fantastic, and I especially like *Hembeck's Page*—it's funny!! The *Coming Attractions* are the best. It's amazing that you sell it for only 35 cents.

Did **Cyclops** really leave the X-Men? He's one of my favorite characters, don't let him go!! And can I trust the people who advertise in your comic books?

Rocky Ryan
3206 GST.
Antioch, CA 94509

Ah, lessee . . . theoretically, Wolverine's claws would be capable of piercing the Hulk's skin if Wolverine were strong enough to generate the force it would take, which he isn't. No, there isn't going to be a SECRET WARS III, since *the One From Beyond* is not only back in Beyond, but he *is* Beyond. And yes, Cyclops left *the X-Men*, but as he's the leader of *X-Factor*, he's by no means gone from the Marvel Universe.

As for trusting the people who advertise in Marvel comics, well, it's like with any advertisements anywhere. If you buy or sell anything through the mail, you should keep copies of all letters or checks or whatever. That way, if there's a problem, you can prove what you ordered and when and how much you paid and all that stuff. We expect that the people who advertise in Marvel comics are honest, trustworthy businessmen.

Dear MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE,

I just read the first issue of the PUNISHER Limited Series, and I am speechless. It was radical—you guys outdid yourself this time! Mike Zeck's artwork was MARVELous!

I think the **Punisher** has been one of Marvel's most original characters. His costume is great. Did Mike Zeck design it or did some other genius?

Steven Grant's writing is some of the best you've given us in a while. I think Mr. Grant should consider writing a PUNISHER novel. I'm sure it would sell. Look at your ally company's TSR DRAGONLANCE novels.

PUNISHER #1 was an all-around great success, but I have just one question about it. On page 2 and 3, the prison warden and his aide are looking at slides of the Punisher in action. How did they get those pictures? This might be a no-prize question and I can explain the pictures. Everyone knows that Spider-Man and the Punisher have tussled quite a bit, so the pictures were taken by ol' Petey in one of his numerous battles. All the warden had to do was get copies of the slides from the Daily Bugle. How was that?

Doug Mauldin
11523 Grapewood Circle
Houston, TX 77089

We're glad you like the PUNISHER, *Doug*, and glad that you wrote in to Marvel to tell us. However, we'd like to take this opportunity to make a suggestion to you letter-writers: If you have specific comments or questions about a single series, like THE PUNISHER, you'd be a lot better off addressing your letter to THE PUNISHER or to the editor of that book (in this case, *Carl Potts*) than sending it to MARVEL AGE MAGAZINE. That way, it'll get to the people who did the series and are best equipped to answer your questions. We get a lot of letters about series we do preview articles on (like THE PUNISHER, NIGHTCRAWLER, and X-FACTOR), and we try to make sure those letters get to the editors and creative staff of the books they comment on. But it would be simpler and more direct if you would send your letters to the title you're commenting on. Even if the magazine is a Limited Series, and doesn't have a letters page, you can still send your letters to the magazine itself, and the editor will get it.

That aside, no, it wasn't Mike Zeck who designed The Punisher's costume. The Punisher first appeared in THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #129, which was written by *Gerry Conway*, who also came up with the basic design for the costume itself. The finished design was by *John Romita*, though.

Dear Marvel,

I'm one of your Marvel fanatics, but I've got a problem at the moment. After we had moved from the United States to Nigeria three years back, I've been finding it very difficult to lay my hands on any Marvel comic at all! Here in Nigeria, before you can lay your hands on any Marvel comic, you'll have to sweat for it, and the only kind of comics you can get here easily are war comics, which I don't fancy. Some of the most recent comics I've got, to name a couple, are: FANTASTIC FOUR #264 and THE NEW DEFENDERS #129 (published in 1983, and that's not too recent, you know). I was lucky in that I was able to get from a friend THE OFFICIAL HANDBOOK OF THE MARVEL UNIVERSE. From what I read of them, I was able to know about the whereabouts of some of my favorite good guys, like Yellowjacket. But I was kind of disappointed that he and the Wasp haven't reached favorable terms.

Anyway, you've heard my problem and I was wondering if you guys could let me know if there was any possible way I could get any recent Marvel comics or any back issues. I've been dying to see THE NEW DEFENDERS #130 to find out what finally happened in their final encounter with the Secret Empire, and what became of the gods of Olympus in the HERCULES four-part Limited Series, and also how the Black Cat and Spidey are getting on. By the way, you guys have got a lot of Marvel-crazy fans over here.

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The easiest way for you to get the Marvels you want regularly, *Eric*, is to subscribe. You can usually find a full page subscription ad in any of our regular titles, with information on foreign subscriptions as well. And if you can't find information on a title you really want, check in the indicia of an issue of that book. The indicia (that little block of type on the bottom of page one) will have the information you need, too. Also, we frequently run ads for comic book stores that have subscription services, where they'll send you the Marvels you want each month, including Limited Series and other comics we don't offer subscriptions on.

And that about fills all the space we have this time around. We'll be back next month, with more news, previews and interviews—and in this space, your reviews—for you to peruse. See you then!

continued from inside front cover

role of disc jockey has been filled by Assistant Editor **Don Daley**. Don described his approach to party music like so: "I brought in records and tapes and played them. I tried to keep people dissatisfied to a minimum, because not only can you not please everybody, you can barely please anybody." Don also revealed the kind of music the Marvel people respond to. "Marvel goes for sort of TV tie-in cult stuff: the theme to HAWAII 5-0, the theme to THE MONKEES, theme to BATMAN, stuff like that. Eighties middle class white club dance music, Sixties stuff. They don't like Seventies stuff that much. A lot of people liked the sort of 1970s disco ethnic music. There were lots of different contingents. I had a great time doing it—I like to play records." **Barbara Johnston**, who handles cover production, mentioned that her favorite song of the evening was "**Nancy Sinatra** singing 'These Boots Were Made For Walking.' I thought that was great."

The centerpiece of the party, as it is every year, was when Jim put his Santa hat on (not literally, although one year he did dress in a full Santa suit) and handed out the mountain of presents in the middle of the Production area. Most of the presents tie in with office jokes, or play on the recipient's personality, as in last year's gift to **Ann Nocenti**: A leather whip and studded wristbands, to help her control **Chris Claremont**. And Jim has a story to go along with every gift. Jim tells us that it takes a few months to get all his shopping done, and he's always on the lookout for appropriate gifts—"the first gift I bought this year I bought for Chris Claremont, when I was in London." It takes over an hour for Jim to work his way through the pile of presents—although sometimes it's a problem just getting some party-goer to actually step forward and receive his gift—knowing Jim's sense of humor. **Ralph Macchio**, for instance, got a can of NEVER-DULL polish this year, "For his books," Jim said, "and also a ten foot long alligator float for his swimming pool. I told him it was the latest Yuppie invention—an Izod boat." Production Ace **Dawn Geiger** suppresses giggles when she mentions her present. "It was lingerie. **Steve** (her husband, penciler of THE SECTAURS) loved it." And **Janet Jackson**, Marvel's Designer, ruefully admits, "I got a skunk," a reaction to her latest new wave hairstyle.

After the gifts have all been given out, and the guests have made severe inroads into the food supplies, the band sets up. For the past three years, Marvel's Christmas band has been **The K-Otics**, self-proclaimed as the only all-cartoonist band left in existence (since the demise of **Ben Day and the Zip-A-Tones**). The K-Otics' leader, **Larry Hama**, tells us that "the K-Otics are **Gary Hallgren, Brick Mason, Nelson Yomtov, Mark Bright, Jim Ohlbris** and Larry Hama. We play rock and roll, pure and simple." Well, maybe pure, but the K-Otics are pretty eclectic. Most of their songs are original material, but the covers they do show some wild taste. "We do one medley that contains 'Sweet Jane,' 'Best Friend's Girl,' 'Oliver's Army,' 'Wild Weekend,' 'I Wanna Be Sedated,' 'Back In the U.S.S.R.,' and that's just one song." Asked how the band went over, Larry allows that they did "pretty good. We got people dancing." Others are apt to give The K-Otics a little more credit, as when Lynn Cohen says that "once the band started, the party was really under way."

For the rest of the party, it's lots of fun, conversation, dancing, noshing, and a chance for a lot of people who work together without seeing much of each other to get together and relax. Here's what some of the guests had to say about the party:

MARK McKENNA: I had a great time. I thought it'd be a lot smaller, but they turned Production into a discotheque. Good food, good company, nice strobe lights.

PAUL BECTON: I danced myself into a sweat-soaked lather. (Dawn Geiger interjects: He was a maniac!) I had to leave before I really wanted to, because I had to catch a bus.

DAWN GEIGER: I liked the decorations, of course! There were cut-out snowflakes, and paper chains that we made . . .

ADAM PHILIPS: It was a beautiful decoration job, and you can say I said that.

JACK ABEL: I had a good time, pretty much. I hung out, ate, talked. It was an excuse for not working.

LARRY HAMA: I always enjoy it. It's a fun thing to have all the Marvel clan together in one place at one time, to party out.

PAULETTE WILLARD: I ate too much and I danced a lot and had a good time. What did I like most about it? The ice cream.

CRAIG ANDERSON: I liked the sushi bar. I tapped my feet. The music was great.

SHOSHANA MALLET: I liked the babies. The babies were great. **Al Milgrom's** got the greatest baby—I'm in love with Al Milgrom's baby.

FRED BAUMANN: It was more fun than I deserved.

DWIGHT ZIMMERMAN: The fun part for me was meeting a number of the people that I haven't seen in a long time, **Flo Steinberg** amongst them.

LYNN COHEN: The thing I remember most—two things: The flashing lights—the whole Bullpen was converted into a Christmas disco, and Jim being Santa Claus, because it was very very funny.

And how better to close off our Christmas party report than with Lynn Cohen's statement that "next year is going to be bigger and better because it's the twenty-fifth anniversary, so it's going to be the biggest party ever." And we can all start looking forward to it now.

—Kurt Busiek

Photographs by **Andy Mushynsky**

Kyle Baker and **Janet Jackson**

Santa Shooter

Larry Hama rocks

Al and **Joshua Milgrom**

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